

REMARKS

The Office Action mailed May 31, 2007 has been received and the Examiner's comments carefully reviewed. Claims 13 and 16 have been amended. No new subject matter has been added. Claims 1-19 are currently pending. Applicants respectfully submit that the pending claims are in condition for allowance.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §102

Claims 1-4, 6-10, 12-17 and 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Samela (U.S. Patent 6,220,873). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection, but have amended claims 13 and 16 to advance this application to allowance. Applicants reserve the right to pursue the original subject matter via a continuing application.

Samela discloses a module 500 including a base 502 and a cover 504. The module 500 further includes a substrate 516 that is secured within the base 502 by the cover 504. In particular and referring to the below annotated FIG. 2, it is believed that when assembled, shoulders A of the substrate 516 fit in corners B of the base 502, fastener boss C fits within a corresponding notch D forming in the substrate 516, and the cover 504 receives a fastener (not shown) through opening E that threads into fastener boss C to secure the base 502, substrate 516, and cover 504 in relation to one another.

Applicants have further herewith submitted Exhibit A for the Examiner's consideration. Exhibit A was printed from the internet on 8/17/07--Applicants do not know when Exhibit A was first published. Exhibit A discloses a GBIC module manufactured and/or sold by Stratos Lightwave, Inc., the assignee of the Samela patent. Exhibit A discloses a cover, similar to the cover 504 of Samela, that secures to a base by a fastener.

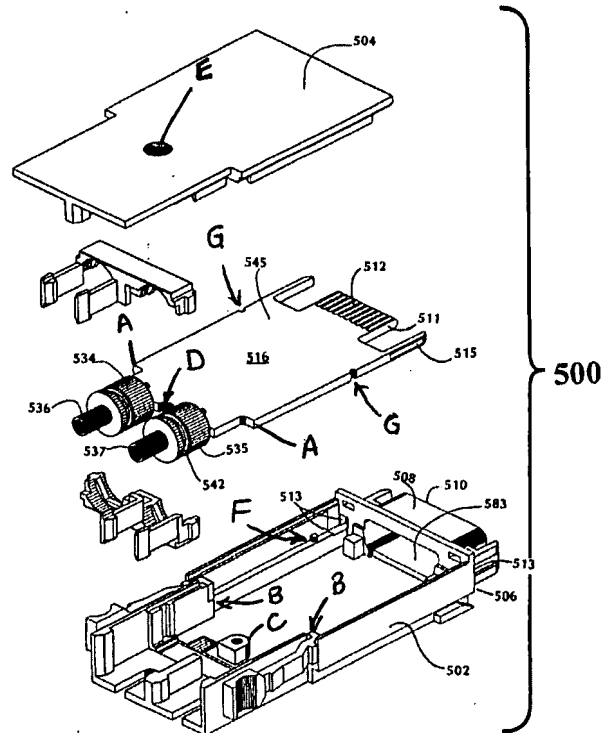


Fig. 2

A. Claims 1-4, 6-7

Claim 1 recites a patch panel module including a one-piece housing and a module card. The one-piece housing has a generally L-shaped construction. The module card is attached to the housing by a snap-fit construction.

1. No disclosure of an L-shaped, one-piece housing

Samela does not disclose with any specificity how the base 502 of the module is constructed (i.e., what portions are of one piece and what portions are separate pieces). And, while not knowing what portions are one-piece vs. separate, it is clear that the base 502 as a whole has a generally box-like construction, as opposed to an L-shaped construction. In particular, no matter how the base 502 is oriented, the base does not have an L-shaped construction.

Further, it is submitted that separating portions of the base, which in fact are one-piece with other portions, to create an L-shape is an improper broadening of the disclosure. To properly establish an anticipation rejection, the identical invention must be shown in as

complete detail as is contained in the claims, including the arrangement of elements as required by the claims. MPEP 2131. No where does Samela disclose a one-piece housing having an L-shaped construction. Instead, Samela merely discloses a box-type base with an open rear end.

2. No disclosure of a snap-fit connection

Samela does not disclose that the substrate 516 attaches to the base 502 by a snap-fit connection. In contrast, it is submitted that the substrate is secured relative to the base 502 by fastening the cover 504 to the base. The Examiner asserts that the guide tabs 515, which insert into apertures 513 of the base 502, provide a snap-fit connection. In sharp contrast, in column 3 at lines 62-63, Samela describes that the substrate 516 has guide tabs "as discussed above" in the background; and in the background, Samela discloses that the guide tabs are provided to "harmlessly discharge any stray static." (See column 1-2 at lines 50-5.) There is simply no disclosure in Samela to properly support an anticipation rejection for a snap-fit connection.

At least for these reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that Samela does not meet the structural limitations of claim 1, and that independent claim 1, and dependent claims 2-4 and 6-7 are therefore patentable.

B. Claims 8-10, 12 and 19

Claim 8 recites a patch panel module including a housing and a module card that is secured to the housing by a retaining structure. The retaining structure includes a flexible latch formed in the housing side and a hole formed in the card. The flexible latch engages the hole of the card to provide a snap-fit connection.

In this rejection, the Examiner asserts that the little projection (noted as F on the above annotated FIG. 2) on the left side of the base 502 and the notches (noted as G) on the substrate 516 provide a snap-fit connection. To properly establish an anticipation rejection, the identical invention must be shown in as complete detail as is contained in the claims, including the arrangement of elements as required by the claims. MPEP 2131. No where does Samela disclose that the little projection is "flexible" as required by claim 8, or that the

little projection and notch provide a snap-fit connection. In contrast, it is submitted that the little projection and notch merely provide alignment between the two parts. It is further submitted that the substrate 516 of Samela is secured relative to the base 502 by fastening the cover 504 to the base, not by a flexible latch that engages a hole to provide a snap-fit connection.

At least for these reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that Samela does not meet the structural limitations of claim 8, and that independent claim 8, and dependent claims 9-10, 12 and 19 are therefore patentable.

C. Claims 13-17

Claim 13 recites a method of assembling a patch panel module. The method includes providing a one-piece housing having a generally L-shaped construction, and pressing the module card and housing toward one another to interconnect the two. The step of pressing the card and housing toward one another includes flexing a latch until the flexible latch snap-fits within a hole of the card.

1. No disclosure of an L-shaped, one-piece housing

For similar reasons as discussed above with regards to claim 1, it is respectfully submitted that Samela does not disclose a one-piece housing having an L-shaped construction.

2. No disclosure of a snap-fit connection

Further, for similar reasons discussed above with regards to claim 8, it is respectfully submitted that Samela does not disclose that the substrate 516 assembles to the base 502 by flexing a latch until the flexible latch snap-fits within a hole of the substrate 516.

At least for these reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that Samela does not meet the structural limitations of claim 13, and that independent claim 13, and dependent claims 14-17 are therefore patentable.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 5 and 11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Samela (U.S. Patent 6,220,873) in view of Wilhelm (U.S. Patent 5,761,033). Claim 18 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Samela (U.S. Patent 6,220,873) in view of Wakabayashi (U.S. Patent 6,560,115). Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections.

Claims 5 and 18 depend upon claim 1. Claim 11 depends upon claim 8. In view of the remarks regarding independent claims 1 and 8, further discussion regarding the independent patentability of dependent claim 5, 11, and 18 is believed to be unnecessary. Applicants submit that dependent claims 5, 11, and 18 are in condition for allowance.

SUMMARY

It is respectfully submitted that each of the presently pending claims (claims 1-19) is in condition for allowance and notification to that effect is requested. The Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' representative at the below-listed telephone number if it is believed that prosecution of this application may be assisted thereby.

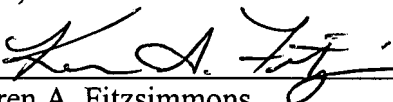
Although certain arguments regarding patentability are set forth herein, there may be other arguments and reasons why the claimed invention is patentably distinct. Applicants reserve the right to raise these arguments in the future.

Respectfully submitted,



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